



MAINE FARMER

Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man.
DWARF PEARS IN MAINE AND THEIR CULTURE.

For reasons, which can probably be easily explained, but comparatively little success has attended the culture of pears on quince roots in Maine. There are undoubtedly two causes for this lack of success:—The first is, neglect of suitable attention and culture;—and the second is, that some of the varieties tried would not flourish on the quince root in Maine or anywhere else. The dwarf pear, even when it flourishes well on the quince root, needs constant garden culture, and unless it receives this it will not be very prosperous or productive.

We have recently perused, in the *Rural New Yorker*, a report of the transactions at an annual meeting of the Fruit Growers' Society, of Western New York. We always look to the discussions held by the members of this society, at their several meetings, because it is composed of practical fruit growers, and because, also, their climate is, in many respects, similar to our own. In this discussion, facts in regard to the dwarf pear culture, were developed, which will be valuable to many of our Maine readers, and we therefore make an abstract of the more important facts of the report. There was one among the members, who represented a very large portion of those who had done something in the business in a *slight way*, and who very honestly made many true statements applicable to his constituents.

H. F. Brooks of Wyoming said, I represent the fruit eaters more than the fruit growers. Don't think it profitable to send Dwarf pears out among farmers, and not to recommend them. What farmers want is a tree that will bear grief well. Could not tell what in the future, but was among the hopeful.

Wm. B. Smith—By your rule it is not best then to recommend improved stock to farmers, as Durhams and Devons, for they are not as hardy as common stock. Farmers should keep stock that will bear grief well.

Mr. Brooks—Stock growing is the farmer's business, fruit growing is only incidental.

Mr. Smith—If farmers would plant dwarf trees and take care of them, in many cases, fruit growing would become the business, and stock growing be incidental; at least, every farmer should have a few trees in his garden to furnish a supply for his family.

Mr. Brooks—What we call a garden where I live, and all around, is a place back of the house where we have a few hills of potatoes and—several hundred pigweeds and the like.

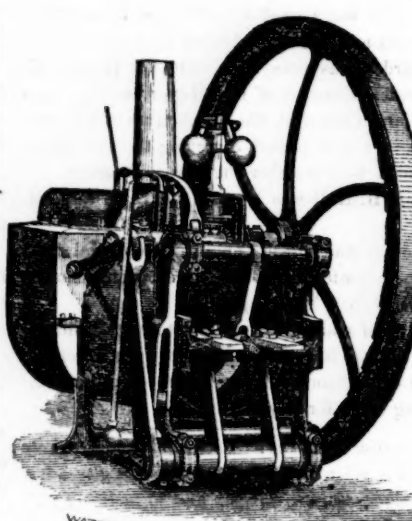
Mr. Fisk of Rochester—Farmers must learn to cultivate their trees, and then they will find the business profitable.

Mr. Ainsworth—We have found out what sorts are hardy and productive, and what sorts are suited to culture on the quince. The Louise Bonne de Jersey is one of the hardiest and best. The Virgeline is a little larger on quince but of better quality on its own roots. Belle Lucrative, excellent on both roots. Vicar of Winkfield, bears and ripens well on the quince. * * * The great secret of success in culture and pruning. Ground should be well tilled and deeply, and this fact should be impressed on farmers. Sold his crop in Boston last fall for \$10 per barrel. * * *

Mr. Brooks—In answer to an inquiry as to his success in pear culture, said he had but a small number of trees in bearing, about one-third of an acre—140 trees gave 30 barrels of fruit. Five bbls. I sell off during a high wind before picking time, and for these he obtained from \$8 to \$10 per barrel. For those picked by hand, from \$10 to \$20, total product \$500. His trees were planted 8 years since; soil—a strong loam, not highly manured, certainly not more during the whole 8 years than farmers will sometimes give to one crop in a year. With the exception of pruning, four acres in dwarf pear trees would take no more time than one acre in potatoes. * * *

Mr. B. B. Smith summed up the advantages of the culture of dwarf pears as follows: It is one of the most important branches of fruit culture and that too, if farmers never plant a pear. Hundreds and thousands reside of villages have in their gardens dwarf trees, and are enjoying the fruit who but they would never taste a good pear. Dwarf trees were just the thing for old people to plant, as they might reasonably hope to enjoy the fruit. The pear on the quince root, it was easy and safe to remove, under almost all circumstances, while standard pear trees are comparatively difficult of removal. The dwarf is subject to no more accidents and no more diseases than the standard. Dwarf will not do for farmers to plant in fields of wheat, or in pastures where cattle roam, but farmers can have them in their gardens. They are of great advantage to nurserymen, enabling them to test the qualities of fruits, and judge of their quality. But for dwarf trees we should know nothing of the quality of a large list of our pears, for we could not have tested them or known anything about them. They are the greatest boon ever conferred on this country, in the way of fruit. Was not in favor of recommending a long list. Janinette was the finest grower possible on the quince, nearly as good as the Vicar, and ripens earlier. Would recommend the following—Louise Bonne de Jersey, Duchesse d'Angoulême, Buerre de Jancy, Buerre Superfine, Buerre Dill, White Doyenne, Urbanette, Easter Buerre, Doyenne d'Almon, Vicar of Winkfield, Glout Moreau, Pound, Catillac, Janinette. There is not one in this list but any one may succeed with—as simple as growing a hill of corn.

The subject of culture and protection after wards came up. Surface culture, and mulching was recommended—the surface culture to be done with a fork instead of a spade, which would cut the roots too much. Belts of forest trees, with evergreens among them, or evergreens alone, were recommended to be planted on the north and west sides of orchards and fruit gardens.



ERICSSON'S HOT AIR ENGINE.

We here give you a portrait of the Ericsson, or hot air engine, which is now coming into very general use as a propelling power for any kind of machinery that does not require great force, (say not more than 8 or 10 horse power.) It is such an one as we now have in operation to turn the power press on which the *Maine Farmer* is printed. The history of this invention, like that of many others which now astonish us by their simplicity, and are highly prized for their utility, is full of interest, illustrating all the phases and changes of opinions which attach to the first conceptions of such, the doubts, the objections, the success and the ridicule and the sage advice so often gratuitously given, that it would be better to let it alone than to spend time and property in the pursuit of impossibilities, and such like encouragements, over the left, as inventors seem ever doomed to encounter.

We are told that Capt. Ericsson was 27 years in experimenting, and spent over one hundred thousand dollars in perfecting his invention, making himself poor before it could be brought into successful action.

We observed that these machines were coming into very general use. For many farm purposes they will be invaluable, and there is but one thing that will prevent almost every considerable farmer from having one; that is, the price of them at present demanded, which we must say appears to us rather strong. The advantages of it to the farmer are that it is simple in action and durable, it may be set in any convenient place where a stone may be set, requiring no great skill of engineering to run it, as almost any one who can build a fire can tend it. It requires no water nor pumping to fill it, nor is there any burning the boiler and sending people to death. Wood or coal may be used for fuel, the coal is best, requiring about a bushel in twelve hours run for a two horse power.

This amount of power might be used by a farmer to thresh his grain, saw his wood, cut his straw or hay, grind his provender, turn his churn, wash his machine, and his grindstone, pump water for him, turn a lathe, or if he wished in winter on stormy days to employ himself at any mechanical employment or manufacturing that required motion of light machinery, it could be used for that purpose. For stationary work, such a machine is worth more than any two horses you can find. With this machine and a little coal a vast amount of farm and domestic drudgery might be done in a year.

MAINE STATE AG. SOCIETY.
The annual meeting of this Society for the choice of officers was held in the State House last Tuesday, 25th inst., when the following persons were chosen for officers during the current year: President—Wm. C. Hammett of Hallowell. Secretary—E. Holmes of Winthrop. Treasurer—Wm. T. Johnson, Augusta.

Trustees—John F. Anderson, South Windham; Calvin Champlain, Excelsior; Seward Dill, Phillips; Theodore M. Bradbury, Standish. Thomas S. Lang, former President, was unanimously chosen President for the present year, but declined on account of the pressure of business as agent of North Vassalboro' manufacturing Co.

A SHEEP-FEEDING EXPERIMENT.
The N. Y. Tribune says that the following experiment has been tried successfully in feeding sheep—One hundred were fed regularly in three feeds with 187 lbs. of hay and 175 lbs. cut straw. This has been replaced with 110 lbs. of hay and the same of cut straw. The sheep being watered over night with 33 gallons of water, in which 14 lbs. of sea salt is dissolved. The sheep continue in good condition.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.
The demands made upon our space by the proceedings of the Board of Agriculture, oblige us to defer for a few weeks the publication of the favors of some of our most valued correspondents. We have on file for publication articles on "Sheep Raising in Maine," by Rev. C. Pearl; "Muck and Grass Crops," by J. E. Rolfe; "Farming in Northern Indiana," by J. D. E.; "Orchards in the Old Bay State," by J. Powers; "On Dug," by Agriola; Letter from the Provinces, No. 17; Letter from Percy Curtis, No. 3; Wayside Notes of Travel, No. 25; "New Plan of Underdraining," by J. Harvey; "John Daley, the strange owner," a poem; together with a variety of inquiries, hints and suggestions, more or less important, which will receive due attention.

We have just received, also, an interesting article on "The Saxony Buck and his family at home," from the pen of an intelligent agriculturist of Oxford county, who has just returned from a visit to Northern Europe, with the results of whose observations we hope to be frequently favored.

HANDSOME STEERS.
A pair of grade Hereford steers, raised and owned by Mr. Seth Welch of St. Albans, one year old last March, grew 6 ft. and 1 inch, and weigh twenty-two hundred lbs. They are well proportioned, smooth, handsome, and docile and have been at work this winter hauling cord-wood to market. Such stock as this is worth raising.

W. F.
It is a good time now to cut scions. When cut they may be kept in sawdust a little moistened, or packed away in some convenient place where they will not dry up.

Maine Board of Agriculture.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAINE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.
[CONTINUED.]

FRIDAY, JAN. 20.

INFORMAL MEETING—CHAMBERLAIN CULTURE.

The Board occupied the hour between 9 and 10 o'clock in gathering information respecting cranberry culture. Mr. DILL said he had cultivated a cranberry bog for five or six years with considerable success. His bog covered five or six acres. It was at first occupied with a row of laurel and hawthorn, which he eradicated by chopping up the turf and carting it off. He used it to bank up his barn cellar, and subsequently matted it with the manure. This nearly paid for getting it from the bog. After removing the turf he carted on sand, to the amount of fifty full loads. After distributing the sand, he set his cranberries in rows about 18 inches apart. In about two years from setting out the growth runs together, which is desirable, for the fruit does not yield until the matting takes place. It is necessary to flow the bog after the plants are set, and keep the water on until the season of frost is over, to the end that the roots remain undisturbed. Mr. DILL cultivated six varieties—the Bull, Cherry, Dingle, each of three kinds, large and small. He preferred the Bull, and next to that the Cherry. He obtained them from West Bridgewater, Mass. They may also be obtained in Wells and Leeds in this State. Mr. DILL found that the parent sand was the best for cranberries, as weeds trouble them in its infancy. When they get well matted, however, they will protect themselves from weeds and grasses. Sand, water, and air, they want, in abundance. The varieties he had named are better for preservation than our native, which soon perish. Mr. DILL made mention of a few native varieties. In the vicinity of Rangely Lake a fine cranberry was found in bogs growing 10 or 12 inches high, in bunches, like cherry, quite prolific, and very good. In the same vicinity were two species of high bush cranberries. One was well known, it had one large stone in the centre, resembling the parsnip seed, except that it was thicker. It was rare, and made a good jelly. The other kind was but little known, and a much better fruit. The seed is about one third as large as the other. The bushes were small, and the fruit grew in clusters, like the one in the leaves. There was one little patch of this in the Rangely plantation, and it is found also on the Kennebec stream north of Rangely—a tributary of the Androscoggin. This latter kind ripens in August and September, while the former does not ripen till November.

Mr. TUCKER had watched the growth of the cranberry for some years. It was with regret that he had been obliged to send to West Oxford for them, where there were so many unimproved plants hard by, when they might be profitably raised. Two experiments had interested him particularly. A neighbor of his had a cold swale on which nothing grew except the coarsest grasses. The soil was turned over with his plow and stuck in his cranberry bushes, and left them to grow with the grass. In two years they had crowded out all competitors, and gave a luxuriant crop of most excellent fruit. An experiment was conducted by a man in Kennebec, who, in a similar piece of ground, planted his cranberries without plowing, lifting the soil with his hoe, sticking in a vine and paying to grass and cranberry, "grow go!" The cranberries soon gained the mastery, and were now rapidly crowding out the grass.

The cranberry was one of the most profitable fruits, and our cranberry bogs are mines of wealth. Mr. TUCKER said the members would discuss the subject of cranberries, and express their own views, even if they coincided with those contained in the report. By discussion the views might be more fully impressed upon the minds of all present.

Mr. CARROLL coincided with the suggestions of the Secretary, and desired to express his appreciation of the report, and to commend the chairman upon his success in drawing pictures, and presenting the conclusions clearly. He was also glad that the State Society last year set the example of withholding premiums where the rules had been strictly complied with.

Mr. MORTON inquired of Mr. Chamberlain the remedy for the evil pointed out in the report, as to the failure of the committee to present faithfully their duties in the awarding of premiums.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN replied that he knew of no remedy but greater care in the selection of such committees. Mr. CESSMAN called attention to the fact that imported breeds had sprung up all over the country like mushrooms, and thought it a remarkable fact, requiring some investigation.

Mr. GOODALE spoke of the comparative amount of premium paid on crops and on animals. It is difficult to make out a full statement in regard to stock, or to draw a picture which shall give an accurate idea of it; as to one who has no opportunity to see it; as to crops, an accurate statement can be given, but it is feared it is not always obtained. Do we offer premiums enough to induce the care and accuracy required in the selection of crops? It is a question which we are laboring in, measuring, weighing, giving description of soil, manner of cultivation, &c. If necessary, give larger premiums and confine them to fewer articles. Other inducements sufficient to make the information accurate, full and valuable.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said that the stock-growing committee demand the larger part of the premiums. They think that the State Society should give a premium on a cow, as often it is; but they should remember that the farmer who carefully tends and notes the statistics in regard to his crops, is constantly spending his time and money in doing so.

Mr. WASSER said he had thought of bringing up the subject of requiring the committees awarding premiums to conform to a certain rule, and to make them do their duty and to give value to their reports. They often say, "A. B. presented a very fine animal of such a breed," and that is all we know about it. The duty should be imposed, to give more full accounts.

Mr. TUCKER called attention to the fact that committees had been inclined to give premiums to "monsters"—monster cabbage, monster squash, &c., without knowing the value of the crop. The committee should be required to state the value of the crop, and the value of the animal, and the value of the land, and the value of the labor, and the value of the manure, and the value of the seed, and the value of the soil, and the value of the water, and the value of the air, and the value of the sun, and the value of the moon, and the value of the stars, and the value of the planets, and the value of the comets, and the value of the meteors, and the value of the lightning, and the value of the thunder, and the value of the rain, and the value of the snow, and the value of the hail, and the value of the frost, and the value of the wind, and the value of the clouds, and the value of the sky, and the value of the earth, and the value of the sea, and the value of the land, and the value of the air, and the value of the sun, and the value of the moon, and the value of the stars, and the value of the planets, and the value of the comets, and the value of the meteors, and the value 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